

M^R. HAROLD MACMILLAN looked bronzed but slightly under-weight when, back from Bermuda, he went to the House of Commons, where the noisiest debate of recent times was taking place. If it is statistically accurate (as has been stated) that on "Tom M.P." rose six times and said nothing this was more than balanced by the number who did not stand up and said a lot. Fortunately Mr. Henry Brooke, who is in charge of the contentious Rents Bill, has a voice that would penetrate a wall of cement and succeeded in making himself heard without much difficulty.

When the vote was taken Mr. Macmillan was seen sitting in his way into the voting lobby with a serene look on his face as though he were glad to be home. On the other hand it may have been relief that the Third Reading of the Rents Bill had been concluded and he could concentrate on the comparative tranquillity of industrial and foreign disputes.

Edouard Herriot

WHILE the British politicians were raging furiously together the French nation was paying tribute to that remarkable and enigmatic statesman M. Edouard Herriot, who died last week at the age of 84.

Herriot was unambitious as a politician yet he rose to supreme office. In no other Parliament is oratory so highly regarded, and he was not an orator. The golden phrase and the diamond-pointed retort were beyond him. It was said of him that he was a dull speaker who crushed his opponents under a mountain of facts.

What then was the secret of his success? Sir Frederick Maurice wrote of M. Herriot that he was at work in his office while most Englishmen were taping their morning egg. Yet despite this he probably understood the English better than any other politician in France. But then his whole character had the quality of paradox, culminating in the fact that he never wanted office but could not avoid it.

It is a solemn thought that in a span of his lifetime he saw his country twice invaded by Germany and, as a boy, listened to the first-hand accounts of the Prussian invasion of 1870. But he never lost faith in his country. The resurgence of France today

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owes much to that vigorous, dedicated man.

That Theatre Tax

WHEN the youthful Dorothy Tutin appeared in Committee Room 10 of the House of Commons to read an appeal from Sir Laurence Olivier to abolish the Entertainment Tax on the living theatre, she read it, as you would expect, quite beautifully. But the best part of it was her own comment when the letter came to an end.

"Sir Laurence Olivier has not said that he wants the tax removed but I am sure that he does!"

Even the Liberals laughed.

Avoiding the Limestone

MANY wives of eminent men prefer to stay out of the limelight. Most achieve this reticence by concentrating on their domestic backgrounds. Lady Casson has achieved the



Lady Casson

far more difficult task of staying out of the limelight, running a house, bringing up three daughters and conducting a career as a busy and skilful architect in her own right.

She even manages to stay out of the limelight collaborating with Sir Hugh, both in his teaching at the Royal College of Art and in his wider architectural practice.

Now, however, Lady Casson is collaborating with another architectural designer, Misha Black, in an exhibition which is being sponsored by *THE SUNDAY TIMES* in association with the Design Industries Association. This exhibition, which will be staged at Charing

Cross Station, and opens on April 13, will compare various trends in contemporary interior design.

Misha Black collaborated with Sir Hugh in the Festival of Britain. Two of his current commissions are concerned with the aesthetics of travel: the "appearance design" (horrible new phrase) of diesel locomotives and the interiors of the new Orient liner, the *Oriana*.

Drama on the River

SIR ALAN HERBERT, who has earned the title of "The Old Man of the River", again summoned his friends yesterday to his house in Hammer-smith to watch the Boat Race. Naturally they were drawn from Sir Alan's three Estates—the theatre, the Houses of Parliament and the Press. He had commandeered or borrowed television sets for every room, and we were able to watch the race on the screen until the boats came to our part of the river when we went on the lawn, cheered them and then returned to the sets to watch the finish.

Norma Shearer and Douglas Fairbanks lent elegance to the gathering. Lord Saller and Sir Robert Boothby represented grit and girth. Sir Alfred Bosson, who so generously entertains Conservative M.P.s and their wives on the eve of a new

session, seemed to be comparing the advantages of Carlton House Terrace, with the banks of the Thames.

Because of the television we watched the pitiful plight of Oxford's No. 5, who had rowed to the point of collapse and had nothing left but his courage. As I have stated, the goodly company in the house party included many people of the stage, but I doubt if even the wide range of the theatre could supply anything more dramatic or pitiful than the camera-caught youth in the Oxford boat, going through the motions when, in his exhaustion, he had passed the point of no return.

Blind Justice

READERS of this column may remember that last week I called attention to the old architectural feature of the Old Bailey which makes it impossible for most of the jury to see the face of the witness in the box. Even that section of the jury which can see more than the back of the head get only a partial profile.

I have it on high authority that this grave defect is now under consideration. Not only is it realised that the situation of the jury is wrong but there is also some criticism of the dock.

It is good to hear that the authorities are at last recognis-

ing structural defects which should have been altered long ago.

Israel's Spokeswoman

THOSE who still prefer sound to radio so the tempered delights of television had a rich reward last Thursday night when there was an international link-up with Mrs. Golda Meir in Tel-Aviv as the pivot. This remarkable woman, who holds the portfolio of Israel's Foreign Minister, has a deep, attractive voice which is conditioned by her native Ukraine tongue and her long residence in the United States.

It was in 1906 that her family emigrated to the U.S.A., and settled in Milwaukee, where she went to school and eventually took a teachers' training course. But five years later she went out to Israel to share in the adventure and the heartbreak of the re-created country caught between the memories of the past and the harsh realities of the modern world. In 1948 she became Israel's first Minister in the U.S.S.R. and a year later she took on the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs in Israel.

As a widow with a son and daughter she faces the mounting problems of the future with sad memories of the past. In fact the most dramatic moment of the B.B.C. link-up was when she listened to a voice from Canada and then said: "Your country is so vast that you have

difficulty in realising how small is Israel." There was a note of tragedy in her voice but also a note of affection as if she were speaking not so much of her country as her child.

Official Vandalism

THERE is trouble in that pleasant part of London known as St. John's Wood Vandalia, in other words, the Borough Councilors of Marylebone, are threatening to install those new hideous lighting lamps which have disfigured so many other parts of London. In case readers are unaware of the true character of these lamps let me state that they are like a long-necked snake which reaches to the sky and then curves downwards into a glaring yellow light, like an illuminated serpent's mouth.

St. John's Wood has kept its character remarkably. It is, in fact, a haven for artists, authors, publishers and even members of Parliament. This part of London was once a forest and in the gardens of Hamilton Terrace, there are mighty pear trees that blossom radiantly at this time of the year and bear fruit in due season.

In the summer the residents can sit in their gardens where the silence is only broken now and then by a faint, distant shout from Lord's as the M.C.C. scores another run against the invader.

One must not spread alarm and despondency, but if the authorities persist in their vile purpose there may be a march of the St. John's woodmen against the Marylebone Town Hall. At any rate, after today they cannot say that they were not warned.

People and Words

"The world would be a happier place if people did not know so much." Too many people are suffering from acute indigestion—unable to digest the knowledge given to them."

—THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

"Some parents are so fussy they think everything is dangerous. Others take the view that if their boy falls off a tree and breaks his arm he won't do it again."

—MR. JUSTICE FLECHER.

"Britain is trying to carry out 20th-century farming with 19th-century, 18th-century and, in some cases, 17th-century equipment."

—MR. D. HAYDOCK ADEY, Minister of Agriculture.

"The Soviet people are proud of the way in which its glorious army fulfilled its sacred duty towards the Hungarian people."

—MARSHAL BULGACHEV.

"It is a mistake to think that the trade unionist is still down-trodden and under-privileged... trade-union members are now the main earners, the main spenders, the main taxpayers."

—MR. JO GRINDON M.P., Leader of the Liberal Party.